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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 003166

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TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: SIX-PARTY TALKS, CROSS-STRAIT  
RELATIONS

1. Summary: Amid the extensive July 27 coverage of a game-rigging/player-bribery scandal in [Taiwan's] Professional Baseball League, all the major Chinese-language Taipei dailies also ran articles on remarks President Chen Shui-bian's made during a video conference with members of the Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan the previous day. Among the major Chinese-language newspapers, only the pro-independence "Taiwan Daily" covered Chen's remarks on the front page; the article was topped with the headline: "Bian: If [Taiwan] cannot effectively manage [its high-tech industry's investments in China], [the government] would prefer that the island refrain from moving westbound." The sub-headline added: "[Chen] has for the first time released [a message of] `effective management coming before active opening'; [Chen] has adjusted cross-Straits policy and urges Taiwan businessmen to follow the [government's] call of `Four First' to first put their investments in Taiwan." The newspaper also spent almost all of page two and three reporting on Chen's remarks and related cross-Straits trade issues. The pro-independence "Liberty Times," Taiwan's biggest daily, and the centrist "China Times," also spent a whole page covering Chen's remarks but only in their inside pages.

2. The Taipei dailies spent much less space July 27 reporting on the Six-Party Talks regarding North Korea's nuclear abilities than they did on local topics. The only daily that offered substantial coverage was the centrist "China Times," which spent almost one third of its page 13 with articles on the topic; outside of a wire story report, the articles focused on the possible impact of the Six-Party Talks on Taiwan. "Taiwan Daily," on the other hand, did not carry any news story on this topic.

3. In terms of editorials and commentaries, former Taiwan National Security Council Deputy Secretary-General Antonio Chiang wrote in the mass-circulation "Apple Daily" that as South Korea seeks to assume a more proactive role in the Six-Party Talks, Seoul has become a "wind sleeve" for people wanting to observe how the situation changes on the Korean peninsula. Only two limited-circulation, pro-independence, English-language newspapers published editorials on President Chen's video conference remarks with regard to cross-Straits relations. The editorials of both the "Taipei Times" and "Taiwan News" said Chen's remarks were "significant" and demonstrate his long-term vision of democratic values. End summary.

#### 1. Six-Party Talks

##### "Wind Sleeve of the Korean Peninsula"

Former National Security Council Deputy Secretary-General Antonio Chiang commented in the mass-circulation "Apple Daily" [circulation: 500,000] (7/27):

". But each country [participating in the Six-Party Talks] has its own plans in mind. The United States is the world policeman that wants to maintain order with regard to nuclear weapons. China wants to become a safety lever in the Northeastern Asian region and to use North Korea as a strategic buffer zone by trying to manipulate the issue. Russia, which used to have a profound influence in this region, naturally does not want to find itself marginalized. South Korea, on the other hand, is more concerned about the [possible] collapse of North Korea and less worried about the nuclear weapons possessed by Pyongyang. It thus has tried very hard to assist Pyongyang in improving its economy and to persuade Uncle Sam to cease using a tough attitude toward North Korea. As for Japan, even though it is a direct victim [of the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula], all it can do, due to some historical factors, is to hide behind the United States and let Washington do the talking for it. South Korea, on the other hand, has criticized Japan for creating

some kind of hurdles for the Six-Party Talks; Seoul has claimed that Tokyo was there to disturb the talks, and such an accusation has greatly embarrassed Japan. .

"In the face of such an impasse, South Korea has gradually assumed a more proactive role by strengthening its ties with both North Korea and China. Seoul took the liberty of communicating with North Korea and the United States, and the result [of such communication] is gradually taking shape. On the surface, Beijing still seems to be the host of the Six-Party Talks. But in reality, Pyongyang may still favor Seoul to play a leading role [in resolving the issue] because both Koreas are of the same ethnic origin, whereas the brotherhood between China and North Korea merely exists in name.

"Seoul has changed its policies toward Pyongyang and Beijing, and the moves have created tension between itself and Washington. But when it comes to the issue of a nuclear crisis in the Korean peninsula, the United States, no matter whether it decides to go to war or live harmoniously with North Korea, cannot do it without the cooperation of South Korea. As a result, Seoul has become the wind sleeve if people want to observe [how] the situation changes on the Korean Peninsula."

## 12. Cross-Strait Relations

### A) "Time for a Healthy Dose of Reality"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] editorialized (7/27):

"President Chen Shui-bian, in a videoconference that linked him up with the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan in Tokyo yesterday, focused on the nation's attempts to realize the virtue of understanding, effective cooperation and long-term peace in cross-strait relations. He said he hoped that under the principle of democracy, parity and peace, the door to cross-strait negotiations will be reopened. .

"Chen - who, full of wishful thinking, has been offering Beijing many goodwill gestures - is finally waking up and is tasting the bitter fruit of his efforts. But it is surprising to see that the opposition leaders still cannot see the error of their ways. They remain full of hope that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)-KMT show will help improve their political prestige. .

"China continues to treat Taiwan as the enemy and, in pursuing its cross-strait policy, has sought every means to destroy it. Given this situation, any talks in Taipei between the KMT and the CCP are not likely to yield any result beyond a mass of propaganda applauding their achievements.

"We hope that the KMT will realize its naivety in trying to `bargain with a tiger for its skin.' As Chen pointed out at the videoconference, if China's `peaceful rising' is not accompanied by `discovering peace' and `developing democracy,' then it is unlikely to ever have a government that loves peace. ."

### B) "Chen Urges Hope for PRC Democracy"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News" [circulation: 20,000] noted in an editorial (7/27):

"During a rambling 90-minute videoconference with members of the Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan yesterday, President Chen Shui-bian proposed that the world democratic community work to construct `a new balance of power that supports Taiwan democracy and cross-strait peace. .'

"No less significant was Chen's decision to take the `high road' of expressing active concern for the welfare and democratic rights of the 1.3 billion people of China as well as of the 23 million residents of Taiwan. .

"Given the degree of political polarization and the presence of chauvinists in all camps in Taiwan, the president's statement required considerable political courage and stands as one of his best, if unfortunately rare, demonstrations of long-term vision and commitment to democratic values."